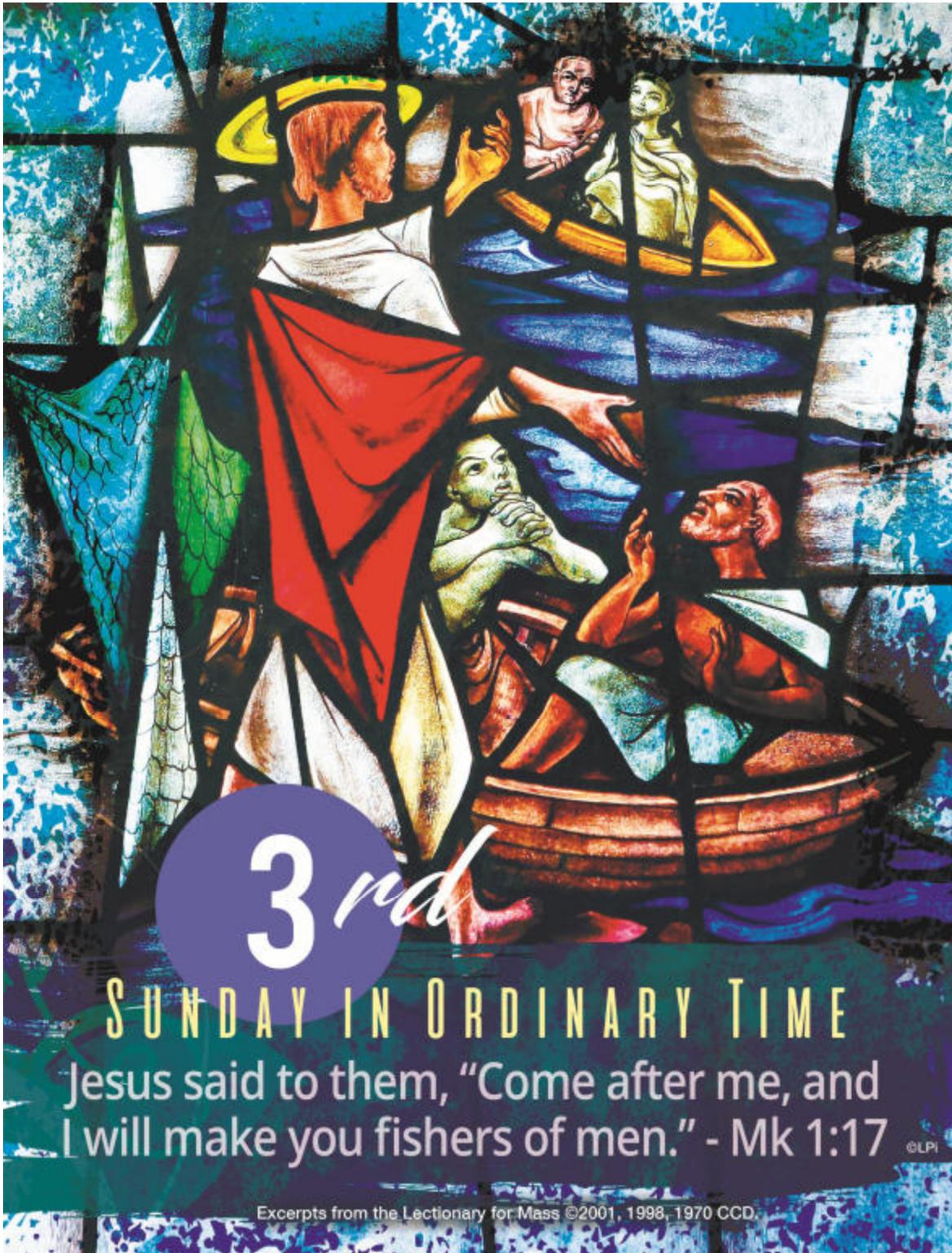


# St. James the Greater

Where All Are Welcome

Third Sunday of Ordinary Time ☩ January 24, 2021

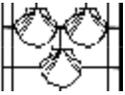


3<sup>rd</sup>

SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Jesus said to them, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men." - Mk 1:17

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## Message from Fr. Tom

Well, here we are in winter. As I write this on Tuesday afternoon, it is snowing. Jesus, ever-present, sits in statue form outside my window breaking bread. Some have expressed sympathy for our Jesus in statue form sitting outside in the cold. Some have even suggested that we find a way to bring him inside for a few months so he can stay warm over the winter. **I personally like the fact that he stays in place like a rock, in good times and in bad, just as we are called to be there for him and his people in good times and in bad.**

Packer fans are lucky to have something to cheer about during these days between Christmas and Spring when keeping our moods up can be challenging. I take great delight in Packer victories, even as I know there is something about football that doesn't quite synch with the Sermon on the Mount. Others have sworn off football for political reasons or because they don't want to support a sport that leads so many of its players to have lasting brain injuries. That last reason certainly gives me pause. Still, I see the goodness in it, and see it as a way for fans to hoot and holler, and get some of that human energy expressed in a way that can, ideally, bring people together. If the Packers end up playing the Kansas City team in the Super Bowl, remember that two of our sisters in Christ will surely come to Sunday mass that day with their Kansas City red, yellow and white from head to toe. So be prepared and wish Ruth and Carissa well! But first, Tampa Bay this weekend...I'm afraid that Aaron Rodgers gets a little intimidated going up against Tom Brady.

**Another thing to shake off the winter blues is Valentine's Day!** I remember as a child loving Valentine's Day. It wasn't the exchanging of Valentine's notes at St. Anne's School, which was more a cause of anxiety than joy. It wasn't the look of pleasure on my parents' faces when they received my heart-shaped art project from school. Nope, without a doubt the greatest cause for joy on Valentine's Day was the gift that my dad brought home that evening. Not the red roses; they didn't interest me at all. It was the **heart-shaped box of chocolates for mom**, which she shared liberally with all of us four kids. Every year, never failing, these chocolates came to us, and only on that one day. **Well done, Dad!**

On Valentine's Day this year, we all will have another opportunity for joy with our **homemade Italian take-out dinners: Manicotti, meatballs, and red velvet tiramisu!** So far we have 75 orders, and can take as many as 200. So, act before it's too late—mainly by choosing to love your neighbor today, but also by getting your dinner order into us.

Speaking of palate-pleasing opportunities, you will have two more chances in the next month to eat good food, support local businesses, and raise some money for Catholic education. On **Wednesday, January 27, if you go to Silly Serrano Restaurant** for some fine Mexican food, and if you tell them you're there to support Regis, **then 10% of your payment will go to Regis Schools**, and St. James School is a part of this. The same is true for **Wednesday, February 10 at Olson's Ice Cream**. Gladly, neither of these eateries chose February 17, which is Ash Wednesday, a day of fasting and abstinence.

**Next week, Fr. Corradi will be coming** to lead our worship. I've been hankering for some retreat time for a while, and so when Fr. Corradi said he would be happy to come, I jumped at the opportunity. **I'll be heading south—not to Florida but even better: Oconomowoc!** The Redemptorists have a lovely retreat center with hermitages or living spaces for one, and I will spend up to five nights there. I went there two or three years ago and loved it. It's not quite the place St. John's Abbey is, but St. John's has been closed to retreatants since last April.

I'll try to give the Holy Spirit every opportunity to lead my prayer and reflection, but one thing I'm pretty sure to be thinking about is **getting old**. Although I should have had this realization twelve years ago, it's only now that I'm realizing that I am **firmly in the "second half of life."** Various circumstances have conspired to make me realize this, one of which was high school classmates remembering events on Facebook. I did the math, and these things, which I remember vividly, happened forty years ago! And of course people comment on my gray hair often. **Life marches on for all of us, for sure. Let's not waste it in petty squabbles and things that don't matter to God. Peace.**

## 17 January 2021, Fr. Tom's Homily

### Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

1 Samuel 3:3-10, 19; John 1:35-42

It's a beautiful story in the first reading, about young Samuel being mentored in the ways of God by Eli. It would be a good passage to use in a Christian parenting class or in a baptism class for Godparents. Samuel had not yet been trained to recognize the voice of God, or as the passage states it, "At the time, Samuel was not familiar with the Lord." At this point, I'd love to go on and speak about how we grow familiar with the Lord through heartfelt prayer, the sacraments, the experience of suffering and ecstasy, through engaging in good works in the world around us. But, recent events and our Church and civil calendar, and, I believe, the urging of the Holy Spirit, make me go a different direction.

For starters, you might wonder if God actually speaks to Samuel after Samuel says, "Speak, Lord, your servant is listening." Well, even though our pre-scripted reading skips over God's response—can you imagine choosing to skip over what God says??—it's right there in the Bible. The Lord says to Samuel, "I am going to tell you something that will make your ears ring! I am going to condemn Eli and his house. No sacrifice they offer will be acceptable to me, because his children offended me greatly, he knew it, and he did nothing about it." In the morning Eli asked Samuel what the Lord said, and, somewhat reluctantly, Samuel spoke the truth to Eli, who humbly recognized the truth and fairness of what the Lord had said, and accepted the Lord's judgment. He is a model for hearing uncomfortable truths.

I want to speak some truth today, as our Church affirms it, for this week that begins on Monday with **Martin Luther King Day**, and ends on Friday with a **National Day of Prayer for Unborn Life**. I don't know if each of you tends to be more excited about one day or the other. But **they are linked, deeply related to each other by what I emphasized last week at the Dignity of Human Life. The same dignity of a man or woman with any color skin or any creed, is the very same dignity of the child in the womb of its mother. And vice versa. One does not have more dignity, that value and worth given by God, than the other, because God made each one and loves each one.**

Maybe it seems that I'm stating the obvious—I hope I am! But recent events nationally and closer to home make me think the evil of racism is not so obvious. Shortly after the violent invasion of the capitol last week, I watched a news show and the guest said what I hadn't thought of but then seemed obvious. "What if those invading the capitol had black skin?" I don't know what you think, but I agree with the man who said violent retaliation would have been fast and furious. I know that is somewhat speculative. What's not speculative was **some news closer to home.**

**One of our youth received a series of text messages from a classmate with words rude beyond belief and unrepeatable here, including words trying to shame her because of the color of her skin.** Honestly, I've been living in a cave. Before last year, I thought stuff like that only happened in a land far away.

To the girl, I'd say *I'm so sorry. I don't know what it's like to be put down because of the color of my skin. It must hurt a lot or be very confusing or make you angry. But I want you to know that what that boy did is wrong, not just because it's mean and hurtful but because it is contrary to God's law who made us all equal in dignity. I hope at least here you will always feel recognized and built up, not put down.*

To the boy: *I'm so sorry. I don't think this is who you want to be. I hope you find your own dignity one day and learn to never feel good about putting other people down. I don't know how you developed this attitude, but I will pray that you grow out of it. You will never reflect the image of God that is in you until you do. I hope you will grieve this sin and rise to new life.*

It might feel like changing topics to speak of the dignity of life in the womb now. But it's not! It's the same dignity that the girl has that the unborn child has—the unborn one who is innocent and has not yet been able to learn how to hate.

One thing I heard that helped me see the dignity of unborn life was when a speaker asked us in the audience, "**When did you start being YOU?**" Were you YOU when you on the day before you were born? A month before? Seven months in the womb? Six, five, four, three, two, one...the moment of your conception? I know for me, it made perfect sense to say that I was ME from that earliest moment. I certainly wasn't anyone else.

*Continued on next page...*

Fr. Tom's Homily, Continued....

And so on Friday we pray for that human life as yet free from learning how to hate, innocent in the womb. We pray for pregnant women who struggle to find alternatives to ending their pregnancies. We pray for conversion to a life-giving view of sexuality that would prevent unwanted pregnancy, and social support that makes giving birth and easier choice. And we grieve, just as we grieve the race-based insults people endure, we grieve the loss of life of the unborn from our failure to see their dignity.

### Mass Intentions & Schedule

Weekday masses are at 9:00 AM Tuesday-Friday.  
Wednesday and Friday are School Only while school is in session.  
Saturday 4:30 PM, Sunday 8:00 and 10:00 AM.  
Masks & social distancing are required.

Sat.	Jan. 23	4:30	Charlie Martinson
Sun	Jan. 24	8:00	Cal & Judy Campbell
		10:00	People of St. James
Tue.	Jan. 26		James Connolly
Wed.	Jan. 27		Tim Brantner
Thu.	Jan. 28		Bernice & Harold Kassing
Fri.	Jan. 29		Liturgy of the Word
Sat.	Jan. 30	4:30	Steven R Tomeshek
Sun	Jan. 31	8:00	People of St. James
		10:00	Julson Family

Here's a prayer I found this week to close,

Grant us, O God,  
A vision of your world as your love would have it:  
A world where the weak are protected, the unborn cherished,  
and none go hungry or poor.  
A world where the riches of creation are honored and shared  
so everyone might enjoy them.  
A world where different races, cultures and creeds  
live in peace and harmony, with equal regard.  
A world where peace is built with justice  
and justice is guided by love  
Give us the inspiration and courage to go forth with willing  
hearts, minds, and bodies to build such a world, through  
Christ Jesus.

### Famous IC Fish Boil Dinner "Drive-Up / Carry-Out" Coming Soon!

The 37th Annual Immaculate Conception Parish New England Style Fish Boil Dinners are fast approaching! The dinners will be conducted by Drive-Up / Carry-out only on the following Fridays: **January 29, February 26 and March 26.** Mark your calendar now and spread the word! Menu: Alaskan Pollock, Red Potatoes, Carrots, Onions, Cole Slaw, and Mac & Cheese (if desired). All dinners are \$11.00. Extra 8 oz. sides of Mac & Cheese are available for \$1.00. Only a limited number of meals will be prepared, available on a first-come basis from 4:30 PM to 6:30 PM or until all meals are gone. Enter the alley between the IC school and rectory from EITHER Highland Ave or Sherwin Ave. Watch for signs and traffic attendants to direct you. Sellers will take your order and payment. Your meal(s) will be handed to you in bags; no need to exit your vehicle! Exit on Sherwin Ave. All meals are packaged in sealed, microwaveable containers (except Mac & Cheese). **Please thank and patronize our sponsors:** Tru-Lock & Security Inc.; Bohl & Proulx Plumbing Inc.; Wilbert Statz Home Builders; Roxanne & Kyle Johnson Family; Piltz Glass & Mirror; ReforMedicine S.C. / ReforMDirect; Schneider Siding & Windows; Chilson Family of Dealerships; MCL Companies General Contractor.

Sermon on the Amount	January 10, 2021
Sunday Adult Envelopes (165)	\$16,932.50
2020 same week (194)	\$11,290.00
Students	\$30.00
Plate	<u>\$106.00</u>
Total	\$17,068.50

Year to date Adult Env./CPL Income through Dec. 31, 2020:  
Actual (July 1-Dec. 31) \$322,891.00  
Budgeted (July 1-Nov. 30) \$310,891.00

Long term maintenance & facilities improvement fund  
and Past\*Present\*Future Campaign income for Jan. 10 was  
\$710.00 for a total since July 1, 2020 of \$41,527.60.

### The Eau Claire County Chapter of Wisconsin

**Right to Life** will hold a virtual Rally for Life on Sunday, January 31 at 2:00 PM. Sarah Minnich, the Upper Midwest Regional Coordinator of Students for Life of America will talk about why we should be pro-life and the ways that we can all help in the pro-life movement. Email [ecctrl@gmail.com](mailto:ecctrl@gmail.com) to receive a Zoom link to attend the Rally.

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Linda Schultz	Commission Rep.-RCS, linda1735@gmail.com
<b>Bulletin deadlines:</b>	end of day Mondays.

### Feed the Hungry

Thanks to the persistence of Mary Kolstad, we now know the hours at St. Francis Food Pantry, and can now resume collecting donation for the food pantry.

Bins are at the entrances.

Hunger is a big issue in Eau Claire during Covid times. Please help if you can.

Donation suggestions:

- Oil,
- spices,
- tea bags and coffee,
- Sugar and flour,
- Tuna and crackers,
- bread,
- cake mix and frosting,
- dishwashing detergent,
- feminine hygiene products.



Welcome to our community of faith, Emily Victoria Becker!

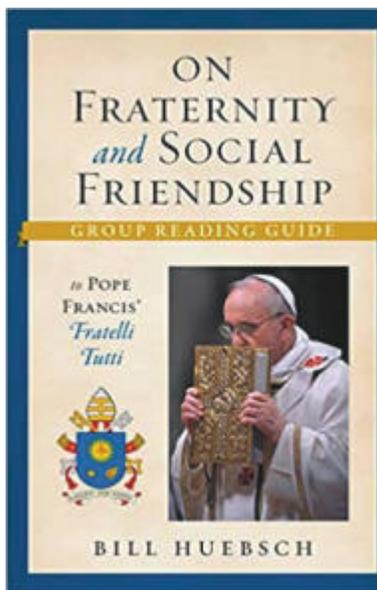
### Lent at St. James

The Liturgy Committee chose “All Will Be Well” as our Lenten theme this year, considering life these days. There will be cards with that quote (from Julian of Norwich) available.

Pope Francis’ newest encyclical offers us a path to consider how all can be well. We will be offering a Zoom group reading guide to Pope Francis’ Fratelli Tutti (On Fraternity and Social Friendship). In this encyclical, Pope Francis acknowledges the perils of both our divisions and our isolation and urges us to build and rebuild relationships, not just in our homes and neighborhoods, but between nations all over the world.

This is a plain English study guide, makes Pope Francis’ message even more accessible by paraphrasing summaries of each numbered section with prayerful discussion and reflection questions that can help us see how Francis’ words apply to our own lives. It is a 40 page reading guide. The name of the book is “On Fraternity and Social Friendship Group Reading Guide by Bill Huebsch. The cost is \$3.50 and can be ordered from Amazon or Twenty-Third Publications.com.

We hope many of you will join us. Please contact Jacky Miller at [jacchuck@yahoo.com](mailto:jacchuck@yahoo.com) or 715-404-7006 for questions and to register.



### Grief Support Group

Anyone interested in being part of a support group oriented at helping those dealing with the loss of a spouse or a partner please know that we are here.

The Second Spouse/Partner Loss Support Group is being finalized now. Contact Pat Hanson at 715-835-9811 or the parish office and we will promptly be in touch.

The Group runs for 6 weeks meeting in the Gathering Space on Fridays at 1:15 PM. Tentative start date is 2/5/2021.

### Take-Out Dinner!

Order Cheese Stuffed Manicotti Dinner Here



Pick-Up on Sunday, February 14th from 11:00-12:00 noon

Orders max out at 200 and must be in by Feb. 9th

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